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MEDIEVAL IDEAS OF THE END OF THE WORLD: WEST AND EAST

By A. VASILIEV

Pagan Rome was to exist for ever. She was *Roma aeterna*, and so called by the Roman elegiac poet Tibullus as early as the first century B.C. This pagan concept, however, was unacceptable to the Christians, who were taught by their religion to expect the second Advent of Jesus Christ and the foundation of a new and eternal state on earth headed by Christ himself. Rome as an eternal city was incompatible with Christian ideas and expectations.

Nevertheless the prestige of ancient Rome was so great in the eyes of both pagans and Christians that both alike were thunderstruck and horrified when in 410 the commander of the Visigoths, Alaric, took and sacked Rome. Pagan reliance upon the eternity of the city of Rome was totally destroyed. But many Christians as well were profoundly shocked by the fall of the former capital of the Roman Empire, and they have left traces of their depression and despair in their literary works. In one of his letters Saint Jerome wrote: "I have long wished to attack the prophecies of Ezekiel and to make good the promises which I have so often given to curious readers. When, however, I began to dictate I was so confounded by the havoc wrought in the West and above all by the sack of Rome that, as the common saying has it, I forgot even my own name. Long did I remain silent knowing that it was a time to weep" (*Ecclesiastes*, III, 4).¹ In another letter of Jerome we read: "A dreadful rumour came from the West. Rome had been besieged and its citizens had been forced to buy their lives with gold. Then thus despoiled they had been besieged again so as to lose not their substance only but their lives. My voice sticks in my throat; and, as I dictated, sobs choke my utterance. The City

¹ Jerome's Letter 126, 2. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, XXII, 1086. *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, LVI (Vienna-Leipzig, 1918), p. 144. *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*. Sec. series, VI (New York, 1893), pp. 252-253.

which had taken the whole world was itself taken.”² In the preface to Book III of Jerome’s Commentary on Ezekiel, the author writes: “Who would believe that Rome, built up by the conquest of the whole world, had collapsed, that the mother of nations had become also their tomb.”³ As far off as Egypt, in the remote monasteries of the Thebaid, a strict hermit and former Roman noble, Saint Arsenius, who lived under Theodosius the Great and his sons, could not restrain his tears when he told of the ruin of the great city of Rome.⁴

We might also recall that forty-five years later, early in June, 455, Gaiseric and his Vandals from North Africa entered Rome and for fourteen days plundered the city, and carried off to Africa much valuable booty, and the widow Eudoxia and the two daughters of Valentinian III, who had been assassinated earlier in the same year. But in 455 the concept of *Roma aeterna* had already been destroyed, so that Gaiseric’s sack of Rome did not produce the powerful repercussion all over the world that Alaric’s taking of the city in 410 had.

But in spite of these two heavy blows dealt to Rome in 410 and 455, Western literature from the fourth to the tenth century still contained such references to Rome as *Caput mundi* or *Aurea Roma*; the very expression *urbs aeterna*, incompatible as it is with Christian ideology, occurs in the course of the earlier Middle Ages, but this is exceptional.⁵

In 324 A.D. or at the outset of the year 325, the Emperor Constantine decided to found a new capital on the shores of the Bosphorus; the construction of the main buildings was begun immediately. Towards the spring of 330 the work had progressed so far that Constantine found it possible to dedicate the new

² Jerome’s Letter 127, 12. Migne, *P.L.*, XXII, 1094. *Corpus Scr. Eccl. Latin.*, LVI, 154. *A Select Library . . . VI*, 257.

³ Migne, *P.L.*, XXV, 75. *A Select Library . . . VI*, 500.

⁴ *Life of Arsenius the Great*, ed. G. Tsereteli (Saint Petersburg, 1899), p. 22 (in the *Zapiski* of the Historico-Philological Faculty of the University of St. Petersburg, vol. I): ‘Ηύικα δὲ καὶ ἡ Σκῆτις πρὸς τὴν τῶν βαρβάρων ἐπόδομης ἡρήματο, συνεξῆλθε καὶ αὐτὸς τοῖς ἄλλοις πατράσιν. ἀπώλεσε, λέγων, δὲ μὲν κόσμος τὴν Ῥώμην, τὴν δὲ Σκῆτιν οἱ μοναχοί. Ταῦτα λέγων δάκρυνά τε ἦφει τῶν ὁφθαλμῶν καὶ ισχυρώς ἥλγει, τὴς ἡσυχίας περικαΐμενος. See also pp. 1-2.

⁵ See P. E. Schramm, *Kaiser, Rom und Renovatio*, I. *Studien* (Leipzig-Berlin, 1929), pp. 30, 37-38. Also Fedor Schneider, *Rom und Romgedanke im Mittelalter* (Munich, 1926), pp. 57-60.

capital officially. The dedication took place on May 11, 330, and was followed by celebrations and festivities which lasted forty days and presented a peculiar mixture of Christian and pagan ceremonies, with the balance perhaps in favor of Christianity. The new city received the name "Constantinople," the city of Constantine, and according to Constantine's original plan was to be an exact replica of ancient Rome. Constantinople became the New Rome, *ἡ Νέα Πόμη* or simply *ἡ Νέα*.

Byzantine literature, both secular and religious, bestows upon Constantinople an endless number of elaborate, laudatory and pompous epithets. The *Lives of the Saints* give a long list.⁶ Perhaps the most magnificent and most concrete glorification of Constantinople is to be found in the unpublished *Life* of Saint Joannes (John) Akatios (Acatius) of Constantinople, some fragments of which Leo Allatius printed in his notes on the Byzantine historian of the thirteenth century, George Acropolita.⁷ But so far as I know, the epithet "eternal" does not occur.

Our evidence on the foundation of Constantinople includes an interesting passage describing a religious procession on the occasion of the consecration of the new capital. The passage runs as follows: "Then the city that was called Constantinople was saluted with acclamations, when the priest cried aloud, 'Oh, Lord! Guide it well for infinite ages.'"⁸ "For infinite ages" reflects the pagan idea of *Roma aeterna* though in our text the phrase is used by Christian priests.

Another very interesting indication that the new capital will

⁶ Many examples of such epithets, especially from the *Lives of the Saints*, are given in a Russian book by A. P. Rudakov, *Outlines in the History of Byzantine Culture based on data from Greek Hagiography* (Moscow, 1917), pp. 110–112.

⁷ Leo Allatius' fragments from the *Life of Joannes Akatius* were published in the Parisian, Venetian, and Bonn editions of George Acropolita; in the latter edition they are on pp. 205–207. In his more recent edition of George Acropolita A. Heisenberg did not reprint Allatius' notes. In the *Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca* (2 ed., Brussels, 1909, p. 117) there is a mere mention: Joannes Acatius CP. Nov. 1, with a reference to Allatius' notes; neither place nor time of the compilation of the *Life* is indicated. Rudakov (*op. cit.*, p. 112) calls him Joannes Akakios, probably a misprint. Archbishop Sergius does not mention the name of Joannes Akatius in his *Complete Menologium of the Orient* (2 ed., Vladimir, 1901).

⁸ *Scriptores originum constantinopolitanarum*, ed. Th. Preger, I (Leipzig, 1901), p. 57 (§ 56): *τότε ενθυμίσθη ἡ πόλις κληθεῖσα Κωνσταντινούπολις, τῶν ἵερῶν Βοῶντων εἰς ἀπέιρους αἰώνας εὐδόκωσον ταῦτην (παραστάσεις σύντομοι χρονικαὶ)*; ed. Bonn, *Incerti auctoris breves enarrationes chronographicae*, pp. 180–181 (in the

live to the end of the world occurs in the lengthy but extremely important *Life of Saint Andrew the Simple* (*Vita S. Andreae Sali*) who lived in the tenth century and whose *Life* was compiled by a presbyter of Saint Sophia, Nicephorus.⁹ This *Life* contains a conversation between St. Andrew and his disciple Epiphanius. We read: "Epiphanius began to interrogate the Blessed One (i.e. Andrew) and said: 'Tell me, please, how and when the end of this world (shall occur)? What are the beginnings of the throes? And how will men know that (the end) is close, at the doors? By what signs will the end be indicated? And whither will pass this city, the New Jerusalem? What will happen to the holy temples standing here, to the venerated icons, the relics of the Saints, and the books? Please inform me; for I know what God said about thee and those who are like thee: It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven;¹⁰ even more, the mysteries of this world.'" St. Andrew's answer to Epiphanius' question is very long. For our purposes the first lines are most interesting. They run as follows: "The Blessed One (Andrew) said: 'Concerning our city know that it will in no way be terrified by any nation till the consummation of time ($\muέχρι τής συντελείας τοῦ αἰώνος$), for no one will ever ensnare it ($\piαγιδεύσει$) or take it; because it has been given to the Mother of God, and no one will tear it from Her holy arms. . . .'"¹¹ These passages indicate Constantinople as a city destined to endure until the end of the world. Epiphanius calls it the New Jerusalem, i.e., the future celestial Jerusalem, and St. Andrew himself says that it will exist till the consummation of time.

According to the Christian conception the New Rome or Constantinople was to exist down to the Second Advent of Christ, and Constantine, its builder, would be the creator of the Roman-Christian state destined to be the last world power.¹² The idea that the Christian Roman Empire, which we call the Byzantine

volume *Georgii Codini Excerpta de antiquitatibus Constantinopolitanis*). See D. Lathoud, "La consécration et la dédicace de Constantinople," *Echos d'Orient*, XXIV (1925), 196.

⁹ Migne, *P.G.*, CXI, 621–888.

¹⁰ Matthew, XIII, 11.

¹¹ Migne, *P.G.*, CXI, 853. See Rudakov, *op. cit.*, 111.

¹² See F. Dölger, "Rom in der Gedankenwelt der Byzantiner," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, LVI, 1 (1937), 3, n. 1; 5; 16.

Empire, should end only with the end of the world passed later into Slavonic literature and is echoed, for example, in the interpolated Slavonic version of the so-called *Revelation of Methodius of Patara*,¹³ of which we shall speak at the end of this study.

The figure 1000 had special significance in mediaeval chronology, either as the year 1000 A.D. or as 6000 or 7000 years from the creation of the world. This may be explained by the survival of the old error that the temporal reign of Christ would last one thousand years. Some passages in the Apocalypse or Revelation of Saint John the Divine, especially chapters XIX–XXII, were also interpreted as meaning that Christ was to reign one thousand years. In the second century A.D. the unknown author of the Epistle of Barnabas announced that the world would last six thousand years, as indicated by the six days of the Creation. On the seventh day, i.e., at the beginning of the seventh millennium, the Son of God would come to reign over the righteous for one thousand years. In the third century A.D. begins the decline of millenarism or chiliasm, and in the fourth century remnants of this belief are very rare. In the fifth century Saint Augustine held chiliastic illusions for a time, but finally rejected them with decision and by his authority practically put an end to that superstition. After the fifth century millenarism was unheard of except very rarely among some sects of Illuminati.¹⁴ But a hazy tradition of the mystical significance of the year 1000 or the multiples of 1000 survived the Middle Ages and among uneducated men in some places still survives.

At the beginning of the fourth century a Christian writer, Lactantius, who died some time after 317 A.D.,¹⁵ attached much importance to the year 6000. In his work *Divine Institutes* he wrote: "I have already shown above that when six thousand years shall be completed this change must take place, and that the last day of the final conclusion is now drawing near. . . . And al-

¹³ V. Istrin, *Revelation of Methodius of Patara and apocryphical visions of Daniel in Byzantine and Slavo-Russian literature* (*Čtenija v Obščestve Istorii i Drevnostei Rossiskich*), Moscow, 1897, book II, p. 17 (in Russian).

¹⁴ See a brief but very good article by G. Bardy, *Millénarisme*, in *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, X, 2 (Paris, 1928), coll. 1760–1763 (some bibliography is given). R. Janin's article "Le millénarisme et l'église grecque," *Echos d'Orient*, XXVII (1928), 201–210, deals with modern time and has no reference whatever to the Middle Ages.

¹⁵ We have no information about Lactantius after 317 or about his death.

though they vary, and the amount of the number as reckoned by them differs considerably, yet all expectation does not exceed the limit of two hundred years. The subject itself declares that the fall and ruin of the world will shortly take place."¹⁶ Lactantius probably based his conclusion that the year 6000 was the limit of the existence of the world upon the chronology of the Christian era used in the second and third centuries by the Christian chronicler, Sextus Julius Africanus; his era counted 5500 years from the creation of the world to the birth of Christ. Thus the year 6000 would coincide approximately with A.D. 500, two hundred years after the year 300 in which Lactantius lived and wrote. But the chronology of Sextus Julius Africanus did not come into general use. Lactantius may also have known the Epistle of Barnabas, which, as we have noted above, announced that the world would last six thousand years.

Let us consider the most important chronologies in use in Byzantium.

During the earlier Byzantine period two eras from the creation of the world, those of Panodorus and Annianus, were used. Our scanty information about these two men comes almost entirely from one source, a Byzantine chronicler, George Syncellus, who died in the early part of the ninth century. According to him, both Panodorus, "the well informed successor of (Julius Sextus) Africanus and Eusebius,"¹⁷ and his shadow Annianus, "a very bad chronologist and historian but an excellent paschalist,"¹⁸ were contemporaries and flourished under the twenty-second Patriarch of Alexandria, Theophilus.¹⁹ Panodorus alone is mentioned by George Syncellus as living at the time of the Emperor Arcadius (395-408) and the Patriarch Theophilus.²⁰ Without

¹⁶ F. Lactantii *Divinae Institutiones*, VII, 25, 3-5; rec. S. Brandt, *Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum*, XIX (1890), 664. Ante-Nicene Christian Library, XXI (Edinburgh, 1871), 481.

¹⁷ H. Gelzer, *Sextus Julius Africanus und die byzantinische Chronographie*, II, 1 (Leipzig, 1885), p. 189.

¹⁸ D. Lebedev, "Sredniki. On the question of the origin of this Old Believers' sect," *Journal of the Ministry of Public Instruction*, May, 1911, p. 114 (in Russian).

¹⁹ Georgius Syncellus, *Chronographia*, pp. 61 and 62. Theophilus is given as the twenty-third Patriarch of Alexandria, A.D. 385-412, in the *History of the Patriarchs of the Coptic Church of Alexandria*, ed. by B. Evetts, *Patrologia Orientalis*, by Graffin and Nau, I (Paris, 1907), p. 425 (161).

²⁰ Georgius Syncellus, p. 617. A mention of Panodorus independent of George Syncellus is to be found in Pseudo-Codinus, *Scriptores originum Constantinopolitanae*.

giving Panodorus' or Annianus' name, George Syncellus in another passage says that from Adam to Theophilus, twenty-second Patriarch of Alexandria, Egypt, and the two Lybias, 5904 years elapsed.²¹ Panodorus lived between 395 and 408, i.e. under Arcadius. Annianus completed his work in 412, i.e., at the beginning of the reign of Theodosius II (408–450). Both were Alexandrians. A short characterization of these chronologists is also given by George Syncellus.²² Annianus entirely depends on Panodorus. Panodorus' era began with August 29, 5494 B.C.; Annianus' with March 25, 5492 B.C.²³ Earlier Byzantine writers, for instance Maximus Confessor (in the seventh century), George Syncellus, and Theophanes (both in the ninth century), used the Alexandrian era of Annianus (*κατὰ τὸν Ἀλεξανδρεῖς*). This era is still employed by the Copts and Abyssinians.²⁴

The most important era in Byzantine history was the so-called "Byzantine" or "Roman" era (*κατὰ τὸν Ρωμαίον*), which Rühl calls "a chronological idea of true genius."²⁵ Neither its author nor the place where it originated nor the time of its compilation has yet been definitely fixed. Gelzer confidently attributes the formulation (*ausgeklügelt*) of this era to the clergy of New Rome, i.e., Constantinople.²⁶ Lebedev believes that the place of its origin was hardly Constantinople, but in all probability, Syria, Mesopo-

tanarum, ed. Th. Preger, II (Leipzig, 1907), p. 228, ch. 34: *καθώς φησιν Πανόδωρος ὁ Αἰγύπτιος; Georgii Codini Excerpta de antiquitatibus Constantinopolitanis*, ed. I. Bekker (Bonn, 1843), p. 84.

²¹ Georgius Syncellus, p. 59.

²² Georgius Syncellus, pp. 62–63.

²³ Gelzer, *Sextus Julius Africanus*, pp. 190–191. Rühl, *Chronologie des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit* (Berlin, 1897), p. 191. D. Lebedev, "Sredniki," *Journal of the Ministry of Public Instruction*, May, 1911, pp. 116–118; 121. *Idem*, "The so-called 'Byzantine' era from the creation of the world. Place and time of its origin," *Vizantiskoe Obozrenie*, III, 1–2 (Yuryev, 1917), 4–6. Both in Russian.

²⁴ Lebedev, "The so-called 'Byzantine' era," p. 4. G. Ostrogorsky, "Die Chronologie des Theophanes im 7. und 8. Jahrhundert," *Byzantinisch-Neugriechische Jahrbücher*, VII (Athens, 1930), 1, n. 1. V. Grumel, "L'année du monde dans la Chronographie de Théophane," *Echos d'Orient*, XXXIII (1934), pp. 397–398. *Idem*, "L'année du monde dans l'ère byzantine," *ibidem*, XXXIV (1935), pp. 319–326. Apparently Grumel does not know Lebedev's study. D. Serruys, "De quelques ères usitées chez les chroniqueurs byzantins," *Revue de philologie de littérature et d'histoire anciennes*, XXXI (1907), pp. 155–157. On Panodorus and Annianus see O. Bardenhewer, *Geschichte der altkirchlichen Literatur*, vol. IV (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1924), pp. 91–93.

²⁵ Rühl, *op. cit.*, p. 195.

²⁶ Gelzer, *op. cit.*, p. 150.

tamia, or Cilicia. "To indicate exactly the city where this era was invented is impossible."²⁷ Schwartz thinks that the Byzantine era was already known in 525 to Dionysius Exiguus, but Lebedev refutes this.²⁸

This new era was first employed in an anonymous chronicle compiled in the seventh century, *Chronicon Paschale*. The first official use of this era is found in the constitutions of the Council of 691–692, which was held in Constantinople and is known as the Quinisext (*Quinisextum*) Council. In the ninth century Theophanes knew the Byzantine or Roman era as well as the Alexandrian era of Annianus, and towards the eleventh century, the former definitely superseded the latter.

According to the Byzantine or Roman era, the first year from the creation of the world began September 1, 5509 B.C., in other words 5508 years and four months before the beginning of Dionysius Exiguus' era from the incarnation of our Lord.²⁹

In Byzantine history the year 6000 after the creation, either according to Annianus' Alexandrian era, which started in 5492 B.C. or according to the Byzantine or Roman era, which began in 5508 B.C., fell within the reign of the Emperor Anastasius I (491–518): this was the year 492 according to Annianus' era and 508 according to the Byzantine era. Byzantine chroniclers and historians do not regard this year as connected with the expectation of universal catastrophe and do not emphasize it at all. Under the year 6000 Theophanes and John Malalas simply mention the construction by Anastasius of the wall against the Persians around the city of Dara in Mesopotamia.³⁰ The Easter Chronicle (*Chronicon Paschale*) whose anonymous author used the Byzantine era, under the year 6000 (508 A.D.) records no event whatever.³¹ All later chroniclers pass over the year 6000 in silence. It may be thought that Byzantine mantic books dealing with all kinds of divination, prodigies, and omens might include some

²⁷ Lebedev, "The so-called 'Byzantine' era," p. 18 (in Russian).

²⁸ Schwartz, *Chronicon Paschale*, in Pauly-Wissowa, *Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, III, col. 2467. Lebedev, *op. cit.*, pp. 13–14; 18.

²⁹ On the Byzantine or Roman era see D. Lebedev, "The so-called 'Byzantine' era," 1–52. On p. 52 we read "End follows." But the rest of Lebedev's study never appeared, vol. III, 1–2 of *Vizantiskoe Obozrenie* being the last issue of this journal. See also D. Serruys, *loc. cit.*, pp. 179–189 (*Origine de l'ère byzantine*).

³⁰ Theophanes, *Chronographia*, ed. de Boor, 150. John Malalas, 399.

³¹ *Chronicon Paschale*, 607: 'Ινδ. ιέ . ἀ . ὑπ' Ἀναστασίου Αὐγούστου καὶ Τούφου.

suggestions concerning the exceptional significance of the year 6000. In this connection there is a very interesting work *On Signs* (*De ostentis*), whose author, John Lydus, lived under Anastasius, Justin I, and Justinian the Great (490—*circa* 565). His book is filled with examples of all kinds of divination, by thunder, by lightning, by the moon. The author is extremely interested in the life of the Empire; all important political, social, and economic questions of the sixth century are treated in his book and are explained by the various signs and omens that predicted them.³² But there is no indication whatever that the world is to end in 6000.

Two mentions of the seventh millennium appear in a little book on the origin of Constantinople, *Πάτρια Κωνσταντινουπόλεως*. This book was for long erroneously attributed to a certain Codinus who supposedly lived in the fifteenth century, but according to recent studies the anonymous author of the booklet lived at the close of the tenth century and compiled his work about the year 995 A.D. under the Emperor Basil II Bulgaroctonus (976—1025).³³ Among various monuments that stood on the Hippodrome the author mentions two statues that “give birth to wild beasts (or monsters) and devour men. One is of the tyrant Justinian and represents his acts during his second reign.”³⁴ The other statue is that of a ship; some say that it represents Scylla who is devouring the men whom she takes from Charybdis; and there is Odysseus, whose head she holds in her hand.³⁵ Others say that the earth, sea, and seven millennia are being devoured by a flood; the last millennium is the seventh or current one.”³⁶ In another place the

³² See M. A. Andreeva, “The political and social element in Byzantino-Slavonic mantic books,” *Byzantinoslavica*, II, 1 (Prague, 1930), 58; II, 2 (1930), 395; IV, 1 (1932), 73 (in Russian). See Fr. Dölger, some critical remarks in *Byz. Zeitschrift*, XXXII (1932), 404.

³³ *Scriptores originum Constantinopolitanarum*, recensuit Th. Preger, II (Leipzig, 1907), praefatio, p. III.

³⁴ This is Justinian II Rhinotmetus, who after ten years of exile succeeded in regaining the throne in 705 and therewith began a tyrannical regime that ended in the revolution of 711 and the massacre of Justinian and his family.

³⁵ Cf. *Odyssey*, XII, 245 sq.

³⁶ *Scr. orig. Const.*, II, 190 (ch. 77): ἔτεροι δὲ λέγουσιν, ὅτι ἡ γῆ καὶ ἡ θάλασσα καὶ οἱ ἐπτὰ αἰῶνες εἰτοῦ ἐσθίμενοι διὰ κατακλυσμόν· δὲ περιών δὲ δὲ ἔβδομος οὐτος αἰών. Cf. Georgii Codini *De signis* CP, ed. Bonn, 53–54. See index to *Scr. orig. Const.*, Preger, II, 315: αἰών — spatum mille annorum. Cf. also παραστάσεις σύντομοι χρονικαί, in *Scr. orig. Const.*, I (Leipzig, 1901), p. 60 (ch. 61). M. Treu,

same author writes: "Anastasius Dicorus erected the church of Saint Plato at the beginning of the seventh millennium."³⁷ But in both these passages the fact that the seventh millennium was the current one is barely mentioned, and there is no indication whatever that people expected the world to end with the coming of that millennium. But at the beginning of the fourth century, as we have noted above, Lactantius attributed great importance to the year 6000 and stated that about this year the end of the world would take place.

If we turn to the Muhammedan world, we see that eschatological ideas had existed among the Moslems from the early time of the Arabian state. In the Koran "the day of judgment," "the day of resurrection," "the day," "the hour," "the inevitable" are repeatedly referred to; the end of the world is represented in the Koran as near at hand, as imminent, but without precise indication of its time; but later Muhammedan tradition, the so-called *Sunnah* (*Sunna*) is more explicit in this respect and connects the mission of the Prophet with the coming of "the hour."³⁸ Dadjdjal (Dajjal), a mythical personage of Muhammedan eschatology, corresponding to the Christian Antichrist, must appear towards the end of the world, either in Khurasan or in al-Kufah, or in the Jewish quarter of Isfahan (Ispahan).³⁹ As we know, the *Sunnah* became, next to the holy Koran, the most important Muhammedan doctrinal source, at first transmitted orally, and later during the second century of the Moslem era (*hegira*), fixed in the form of written *hadiths*. In its technical sense a *hadith* (literally "narrative") is an act or saying attributed to Muhammed or to one of his companions; many of them were fictitious, fabricated after Muhammed's death. Only in the third Moslem century were the various collections of *hadiths* compiled into six books which have since become standard.

The interesting point must be made that at the very beginning

Excerpta Anonymi Byzantini (Ohlau, 1880), p. 17. *Incerti Auctoris Breves enarrationes chronographicae*, ed. Bonn, p. 183 (under *Georgii Codini Excerpta*).

³⁷ *Scr. orig. Const.*, II, 232 (ch. 40): Τὸν ἄγιον Πλάτωνα ἀνήγειρεν Ἀναστάσιος ὁ Δίκοπος εἰς τὴν ἀρχὴν τοῦ ἐβδόμου αἰώνος. Cf. *Georgii Codini De aedificiis* CP, ed. Bonn, p. 87.

³⁸ P. Casanova, *Mohammed et la fin du monde*, I (Paris, 1911), p. 31.

³⁹ See the article *Dadjdjal* in *Encyclopédie de l'Islam*, vol. I, p. 909. Also Casanova, *op. cit.*, pp. 18 and 46.

the hadiths already dealt with the end of the world; probably they associated the idea of the coming of "the hour" with the taking of Yathrib-Medina by Muhammed, the aim of the first Muhammedans.⁴⁰ There was of course no question of any military expedition against Yathrib-Medina. A deputation from the city urged Muhammed to leave Mekka and invited him to make Yathrib-Medina his home. This was in the famous year 622, that of the migration of Muhammed from Mekka to Medina, the year which is frequently but incorrectly called the year of the flight (*hidjrah* in Arabic, distorted by Europeans into *hegira*, etc.). This year has become the beginning of the Muhammedan era.

Later, after their brilliant victories over the Byzantine Empire and numerous conquests in Asia and North Africa, the Arabs devoted all their energy to the taking of the capital of the Empire, Constantinople. At this time the hadiths began to substitute the name of this city for Medina. The change at the beginning was definite political propaganda directed towards the taking of Constantinople; only later did the hadiths associate the coming of Dadjdjal and the final "hour" with the fall of Constantinople. But we know that the two most important Arab attempts to take Constantinople, in 674–677 when the Emperor Constantine IV and the Umayyad Caliph Muawiyah I were reigning, and in 717–718 when the Emperor Leo III and the Caliph Sulayman (Soleiman) were on the throne, were complete failures. We must remember that among some Muhammedans of the earlier period the doctrine existed that Muhammed's mission would last one hundred years. His mission, like that of the last Prophet, could come to its close only with the end of the universe. Originally the predictions of the end of the world most probably concerned exclusively the religious field, and only later *post factum* were connected with political events to come, like the taking of Constantinople, and were adapted to specific purposes. To Muhammed himself, of course, the Byzantine capital had no connection with the "hour." The most ancient hadiths referring to Constantinople must postdate the first great expeditions of the Umayyads. One *hadith* says: "You will certainly conquer Constantinople.

⁴⁰ See M. Canard, "Les expéditions des Arabes contre Constantinople dans l'histoire et dans la légende," *Journal Asiatique*, CCVIII (1926), 108. H. Lammens, *Études sur le règne du calife Omaiyade Moawia I* (Paris, 1908), 444 = *Mélanges*

Excellent will be the emir and the army who will take it." Another *hadith* very curiously mentions both Rome and Constantinople; the latter was to fall first; Rome's turn was to come later.⁴¹

But the prediction of the fall of Constantinople was not fulfilled. The capital of the Byzantine Empire continued its independent existence.

"Muhammed's community passed into a new century without any catastrophe to mark the date, under the reign of the most pious Umayyad caliph Umar (Omar) II (717–720) when the directions given by Muhammed and the rights of his descendants to authority were more highly esteemed than ever before."⁴² In Persia and Central Asia the people were really convinced that the domination of the Arabs was destined to last only one hundred years and they expected its end in the year 100 of the *hidjrah* (*hegira*).⁴³ Since Constantinople was not taken, the final "hour" had to be postponed. Exact figures for the end of the world disappeared, and the hadiths began to suggest patience to the victorious Arabs who were disappointed at being unable to take the Byzantine capital; the hadiths proclaimed that the end of the world would be preceded by the fall of Constantinople but exactly when it would happen was unknown. Perhaps "these *hadiths* were put in circulation in order to inflame the zeal of the Arabs for their raids in Romania (that is, against Byzantium). But the example of the Caliph Sulayman (Soleiman) shows how popular under the Umayyads was the enterprise against Constantinople and how much it flattered the pretensions of newly-born Arabian imperialism."⁴⁴ In this connection there is a very interesting hadith referring to Constantinople. It runs as follows: "If the world had only one day to live, God would lengthen it to permit one man of my family to bring under subjection the mountains of

de la Faculté Orientale de l'Université Saint-Joseph (Beyrouth), III, 1, p. 308. Yathrib is the ancient pre-Islamic name of Medina.

⁴¹ Canard, *op. cit.*, pp. 105–106.

⁴² W. Barthold, *On the history of Arabian Conquests in Central Asia, Accounts (Zapiski)* of the Oriental Section of the Russian Archaeological Society, XVII (1906–1907), 0146 (in Russian).

⁴³ Barthold, *op. cit.*, p. 0147.

⁴⁴ H. Lammens, *Études sur le règne du calife Omayade Moawia I* (Paris, 1908), p. 444 = *Mélanges de la Faculté Orientale de l'Université Saint-Joseph* (Beyrouth), III, 1, p. 308. See also M. Canard, *op. cit.*, p. 107.

Daylam and Constantinople.”⁴⁵ According to some hadiths, seven years were to pass between the taking of Constantinople and the apparition of Dadjdjal. At the very moment when the Moslems were busy dividing the spoils the cry would resound, “Dadjdjal is with you.” Then they would drop everything and come back to combat Dadjdjal.⁴⁶

Referring to Byzantino-Arabian relations in the eighth century V. Barthold gives some interesting lines on the expectation of the end of the world. “The struggle between Byzantium and the Caliphate,” Barthold writes, “assumed the character of a sacred war both for Christians and for Muhammedans; Christianity could not be reconciled to the loss of Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulchre. As to the Moslems, the existence of the world city on the Bosphorus constantly reminded them that the aim of victory for the faith as indicated in the Koran,⁴⁷ that is, the subjugation of all dissidents from Moslem power, had not been attained. Both sides were disappointed by the outcome of the struggle: the Greeks did not take Jerusalem, the Arabs failed to take Constantinople. In this frame of mind triumph changed to repentance among Christians as well as Moslems, and both expected the end of the world. It seemed to both that only just before the end of the world could their final aims be attained. In the Latin world a legend became current that before the end of the universe a Christian ruler (the Frankish king or the Byzantine emperor) would enter Jerusalem and dedicate his earthly crown to the Savior, while the Moslems expected the end of the world to be preceded by the fall of Constantinople. It is not accidental that the reign of the ‘sole pious’ Umayyad Caliph, Omar II (717–720), came about the year 100 of the hegira (about 720)⁴⁸ when the end of the Moslem state and also the end of the world were expected, and after the unsuccessful siege of Constantinople in the time of the preceding Caliph Sulayman (Soleiman).”⁴⁹

The attitude of the Arabs to the expected fall of Constantinople

⁴⁵ See Canard, *op. cit.*, p. 107. The mountains of Daylam (Dailem) are in Persia south of the Caspian Sea. On “one man of my family” see Canard, p. 107, n. 3.

⁴⁶ Canard, p. 108.

⁴⁷ Koran, IX, 29: “Fight those who do not believe in Allah, nor in the latter day, nor do they prohibit what Allah and His Apostle have prohibited, nor follow the religion of truth . . . until they pay the tax in acknowledgment of superiority and they are in a state of subjection.”

⁴⁸ See above, p. 473.

⁴⁹ V. Barthold in his review of my Russian edition, *Lectures on the History of*

in the eighth century appears in a recent sprightly and popular book on *Imperial Byzantium*. "It was a fixed idea in Islam that the fall of Constantinople would mean the end of the world. Or, to put the matter more crudely, the Mohammedan belief was that if such a catastrophe were possible, then anything might happen."⁵⁰ This statement, of course, is rather too positive.

Perhaps in connection with the struggle between the Omayyad (Umayyad) Caliphate and Byzantium for the possession of Constantinople in the seventh and eighth centuries, Messianic hopes appeared among the Oriental Jews. The tremendous assault of Muawiyah on Constantinople in 672-677, though finally unsuccessful, aroused many hopes among the mystically inclined population within Oriental Jewry that the long conflict between Esau or Edom, as the Talmudists named the Roman or Byzantine Empire, and Ishmael or Ismaelites, i.e., the Muhammedans, would subsequently usher in the Messianic age. This Messianic excitement assumed active form during the reign of Abd-al-Malik (685-705) in the movement of Abu-'Isa al-Isfahani and his disciple Yudgan (Yudghan or Judah) of Hamadan, after whom the Jewish sect was named Yudganiyah (Yudghaniyah). The second great assault on Constantinople (717-718) again aroused Messianic expectations. It was sometimes hoped that the Messiah would appear in Rome, that is, New Rome, Constantinople, to witness the mutual destruction of Esau and Ishmael.⁵¹ According to a Christian chronicler of the tenth century, Pseudo-Symeon Magister, the Jews before the Messiah expected Antichrist, who was to be born of a nun,⁵² "a curious projection of his own belief in the virgin birth."⁵³

Byzantium, in *Zapiski Kollegii Vostokovedov*, I (Leningrad, 1925), 470-471 (in Russian). I have given this passage in the English and French editions of my *History of the Byzantine Empire*. English ed., I (Madison, 1928), 290; French ed., I (Paris, 1932), 315-316.

⁵⁰ Bertha Diener, *Imperial Byzantium*, translated from the German by Eden and Cedar Paul (Boston, 1938), 341. The original German edition of the book, under a pseudonym, was published in 1937. Sir Galahad, *Byzanz. Von Kaisern, Engeln und Eunuchen* (Leipzig, Vienna, 1937). There is a French translation of this work by Jacques Chipelle-Astier (Paris, 1937).

⁵¹ Jacob Mann, *Resumé* of an unpublished study in *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 47 (1927), 364. See also H. Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden*, 4te verbesserte und ergänzte Auflage, V (Leipzig, 1909), 212-213.

⁵² *Pseudo-Symeon Magister*, ed. Bonn, p. 669.

⁵³ Joshua Starr, *The Jews in the Byzantine Empire 641-1204* (Athens, 1939), p. 73.

In connection with the expected fall of Constantinople in 717–718 may be mentioned here the Messianic movement in Iraq in Mesopotamia, where about 720 a certain Christian, Serene (Serenus) made his appearance, who after adopting Judaism presented himself as Messiah or his precursor to the Jews of the region of Mardin. This Messianic expectation perhaps shows the Jewish reaction to the news that the Muhammedan conquerors were on the point of taking the very stronghold of the Christian Empire. The imminent fall of Constantinople to the Arabs might have been considered by the Jews of the period a forerunner of the Messianic era.⁵⁴ It has been assumed that this movement affected even the Jews in distant Spain, and that these Messianic expectations were clearly the cause of the persecutions decreed against the Jews in Byzantium by Leo the Isaurian.⁵⁵ But quite recently J. Starr announced that a fresh study based on additional, as well as better, texts has convinced him that there is no valid basis for supposing that the movement spread beyond Asia Minor.⁵⁶

Let us pass now to the Christian era in use today.

The origin of our Christian era, dating from the year of the birth, or better the incarnation, of Christ, is connected with the name of Dionysius Exiguus. An abbot in Rome, in 525 he composed his *Liber de Paschate*, an Easter table; the work was written at the suggestion of Bishop Petronius, to whom the introduction was dedicated. In the introduction after mentioning that Saint Cyril had begun his chronology with the time of Diocletian and ended it with the year 247, Dionysius, continuing Cyril's work, said: "Beginning with the year 248 of that rather tyrant than emperor, we have not wanted to connect our chronology with the memory of the impious persecutor, but we have preferred to indicate the years from the incarnation of Our Lord Jesus Christ, in order that

⁵⁴ Idem, "Le mouvement messianique au début du VIII^e siècle," *Revue des études juives*. New series, II (CII), July–December 1937, pp. 91–92; the whole article pp. 81–92. J. Mann in *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 47 (1927), 364. H. Graetz, *Geschichte der Juden*, 4th ed., V (Leipzig, 1909), 169–170; note 14, pp. 457–460. Byz. sources: *Theophanes*, de Boor, 401; *Anastasii Historia Tripartita*, ed. de Boor, 260; *Cedr.*, I, 793. Byzantine sources give no name.

⁵⁵ J. Mann, *loc. cit.* J. Starr, *The Jews in the Byzantine Empire*, 92. See also Graetz, *op. cit.*, V, 170.

⁵⁶ J. Starr, *The Jews in the Byzantine Empire*, p. 73.

the beginning of our hope may be clearer to us, and the cause of human reparation, *id est* the passion of Our Redeemer, may manifest itself more evidently.”⁵⁷ In other words Dionysius continued and improved the Easter tables of Cyril of Alexandria; but first of all he substituted the Christian for the Diocletian era, i.e., he counted the years from the birth or incarnation of Christ, which he placed in 753 *ab urbe condita*. Dionysius died in 540.⁵⁸

It was a long time before Dionysius’ era became generally accepted. We need not be surprised, because originally his era, like other eras, was not intended to establish a general system of dates of events, but merely set the time of Easter for a number of years. The first official document that was dated by Dionysius’ era was a capitulary of the major-domo Carloman in 742. At the same period this era was used in French private documents, and at the outset of the ninth century in German; it is not to be found in imperial documents before 876. The popes began to use it with John XIII (965–972), but only with the accession to the papal throne of Eugenius IV in 1431 have the years of Christ been regularly employed. These data show us clearly that about the year 1000 Dionysius’ era had by no means spread all over Western Europe and was not yet in popular use. In Constantinople this era began to be used among Christians in the sixteenth century, i.e., after the fall of the Byzantine Empire, under the sultans.⁵⁹ In Russia Dionysius’ era was introduced by Peter the Great in 1700. In this connection a Russian scholar and priest, D. Lebedev, writes that Peter I, who was captivated by Western influences, both good and bad, committed the very great stupidity of introducing into Russia Dionysius’ poor and pitiful era in place of the excellent Roman era dating from the creation of the world.⁶⁰ In another study the same scholar says: “The calendar

⁵⁷ Dionysius Exiguus, *Liber de Paschate, praefatio*, Migne, P.L., LXVII, 487.

⁵⁸ On Dionysius see A. Jülicher, *Dionysius Exiguus*, in *Pauly-Wissowa, Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, V (1905), coll. 998–999. M. Schanz, *Geschichte der römischen Litteratur*, IV, 2 (Munich, 1920), pp. 589–591. O. Bardenhewer, *Geschichte der althirchlichen Literatur*, V (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1932), pp. 224–228.

⁵⁹ S. F. Rühl, *Chronologie der Mittelalters und der Neuzeit* (Berlin, 1897), p. 129; 197–200.

⁶⁰ D. Lebedev, “Sredniki,” *Journal of the Ministry of Public Instruction*, May, 1911, pp. 132–135. *Idem*, Review of A. P. Dyakonov’s book on John of Ephesus, *Vizant. Vremennik*, XVIII (1911–1913), 78. Both in Russian.

reform of Peter I made no progress whatever and, from a scientific standpoint, was such another groundless concession to the West as would have been the introduction of the deformed and obsolete Gregorian calendar. The high qualities of the 'Byzantine' era are acknowledged by Western scholars who express regret that it failed to enter into general use."⁶¹

Dionysius' era leads us now to consider the year 1000. It has been often supposed that there was general expectation of the end of the world in this year, and that as it approached all sorts of terrors manifested themselves among the panic-stricken men of the West. The actual facts, however, are somewhat different. Let us examine our sources.

It is well known that the most important text for the description of the terrors of the year 1000 is the *History* of Raoul Glaber, who lived in the eleventh century and whose book embraces the years 900–1044. In his work we read that in various regions of different countries among uneducated and superstitious men, fear existed of the approaching year 1000. He mentions signs and prodigies, mostly of a fantastic and amusing character, and adds: "These things aforesaid befell more frequently than usual in all parts of the world about the thousandth year after the birth of Our Lord and Saviour."⁶² But there is a striking difference between scattered outbreaks of apprehension of the coming end of the world and universal expectation of the last judgment. Relief and increasing activities and energy may be noted after the year 1000, especially in the field of repairing old churches and building new ones. Glaber also says: "On the threshold of the aforesaid thousandth year, some two or three years after it, it befell almost throughout the world, but especially in Italy and Gaul, that the fabrics of churches were rebuilt, although many of these were still seemly and needed no such care."⁶³ According to the same author, after the year 1000 had passed without catastrophe, some men began to speculate upon the thousandth year after the Pas-

⁶¹ D. Lebedev, "The so-called 'Byzantine' era," *Vizantiskoe Obozrenie*, III, 1–2 (Yuryev, 1917), p. 3 (in Russian).

⁶² Glaber, *Historiae*, II, 6, 12. *Raoul Glaber, Les cinq livres de ses histoires* (900–1044), publiées par M. Prou (Paris, 1886), p. 39. An English translation of the passage concerning the year 1000 in G. G. Coulton, *Life in the Middle Ages*. Four volumes in one (New York, 1931), p. 2.

⁶³ Glaber, III, 4, 13; ed. Prou, p. 62; Coulton, p. 3.

sion of Our Lord, which fell on the year 1033. In Glaber's chronicle we read: "After the manifold signs and prodigies which came to pass in the world, some earlier and some later, about the thousandth year from Our Lord's birth, it is certain that there were many careful and sagacious men who foretold other prodigies as great when the thousandth year from His Passion should draw nigh." ⁶⁴ When Glaber comes to the year 1033, "that is the thousandth year from the Passion of Our Saviour," he only remarks that several most famous men and representatives of "sacred religion" died "in the Roman world" (*in Orbe Romano*).⁶⁵ But in another place Glaber gives the very interesting information that in this same year, 1033, at the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem there was such a confluence of pilgrims, both noble and poor, as had never been seen before; "many of them desired to die before regaining their country."⁶⁶

As a monk and chronicler, who lived in Gaul, Glaber had no large horizon to afford him information; he knew something about his own region, his own country, but when he mentions phenomena that occurred "in all parts of the world," his statement has no value. One conclusion only may be drawn from Glaber's chronicle, which is that, as I have already noted, in some places especially among uneducated and simple minded people some superstitious apprehension was felt and recorded.

In this respect the *Letter of Adso de Moutier-en-Der to Queen Gerberga On the place and time of Antichrist* is very interesting. Adso, born after 920, was elected abbot of Moutier-en-Der in 967 and abbot of S. Benigne de Dijon in 990. Some time before 980 he compiled this letter addressed to Gerberga, Queen of the Western Franks, daughter of the King of Germany, Henry I, and wife of the French King, Louis d'Outremer. Though this writing itself has no value whatever,⁶⁷ it is important as a reflection of the feeling of certain groups of people who around the year 1000 expected the coming of Antichrist, i.e., the end of the world. It is clear that Adso himself did not believe that the year

⁶⁴ Glaber, IV, 1; ed. Prou, p. 90; Coulton, p. 6.

⁶⁵ Glaber, IV, 4, 9; ed. Prou, p. 99. This passage is not to be found in Coulton's book.

⁶⁶ Glaber, IV, 6; ed. Prou, p. 106. Not translated by Coulton.

⁶⁷ See M. Manitius, *Geschichte der lateinischen Literatur des Mittelalters*, II (Munich, 1923), p. 433.

1000 was the term marked by God to the world. In his *Letter* he emphasizes the fact that the time of Antichrist has not yet come, and that nobody knows when Our Lord will come for the Last Judgment. We read: "This time (of Antichrist's arrival) has not yet come, for, although we see that most of the Roman Empire was destroyed, however, as long as the kings of the Franks exist, who must hold the Roman Empire, the dignity of the Roman State shall not entirely perish, because it will stand in its kings."⁶⁸ Another passage reads: "What space of time is to elapse until the Lord comes for the Last Judgment, nobody knows; and this remains at the disposal of God, who will judge men at that hour which was fixed (by Him) for judgment centuries ago."⁶⁹ But these quotations show plainly that enough popular apprehension of the Last Judgment existed just before the year 1000 to make it necessary that the Abbot should reassure the people by proclaiming that neither the coming of Christ for the Last Judgment nor that of Antichrist, His precursor, was definitely dated. It should be mentioned that Adso compiled his *Letter* at the request of Queen Gerberga herself.⁷⁰

The Apostle Paul in his second Epistle to the Thessalonians writes: "Be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition" (II, 2-3).

The first writer to mention the idea that the end of the world would take place immediately after the year 1000 was Cardinal Baronius at the beginning of the seventeenth century, in his Ecclesiastical Annals. He referred to the passage from the Apostle Paul quoted above and wrote under the year 1001: "A new century starts. The first year after the thousandth one begins . . . by vain assertion of some people it was announced as the last year of the world, or nearly so: in that year the man of sin, son of perdition, called Antichrist, should be revealed. This was pro-

⁶⁸ *Epistola Adsonis ad Gerbergam Reginam de Ortu et tempore Antichristi*, E. Sackur, *Sibyllinische Texte und Forschungen* (Halle, 1898), p. 110. This letter was also printed in Migne, P.L., CI, 1291-1298 (among Alcuin's works). On Adso see Sackur, *Introduction*, pp. 99-104. Manitius, *op. cit.*, II, 432-440.

⁶⁹ Sackur, p. 113.

⁷⁰ Sackur, p. 113.

mulgated in Gaul (*in Galliis*), first predicted in Paris, and then proclaimed over the world; it was credited by many; indeed, the simpler ones accepted it with fear; to more educated people it seemed unacceptable.”⁷¹ Baronius’ sources were two mediaeval chroniclers, Sigibert and Glaber.

In 1633 a French scholar, Le Vasseur, after paraphrasing in French Baronius’ passage, which was written in Latin, and giving the same references to Sigibert and Glaber, wrote: “The year expired . . . fraud was recognized,” . . . and life began again, in every field, especially in the building of new churches.⁷² Both Baronius and Le Vasseur, though explicitly stating that the idea of the destruction of the world in the year 1000 or 1001 was an error and a fraud, believed that a number of people at the time were certain that the end of the world was at hand and acted accordingly.

In the eighteenth century an English historian, William Robertson (1721–1793), who made one of the first successful attempts in England at historical generalization on the basis of a vast knowledge of factual material, wrote: “The thousand years, mentioned by St. John (XX, 2, 3, 4), were supposed to be accomplished, and the end of the world to be at hand. A general consternation seized mankind; many relinquished their possessions; and, abandoning their friends and families, hurried with precipitation to the Holy Land, where they imagined that Christ would quickly appear to judge the world.”⁷³

It is most surprising that Voltaire in his numerous writings, if I am not mistaken, gives no description of the terrors of the year 1000. One would think that to picture the imaginary turmoil and distress of that year would have exactly suited his biting and sarcastic style. Neither in his *Essai sur les moeurs* nor in his *Dictionnaire philosophique* are the terrors of the year 1000 described. He mentions the “idea of a resurrection after ten centuries,”

⁷¹ Baronius, *Annales Ecclesiastici*, XVI (Lucca, 1644), 410 (under 1001); ed. Barri-Ducis, XVI (1869), p. 386. The first edition came out in Rome, in 1588–1607.

⁷² Jacques Le Vasseur, *Annales de l'église cathédrale de Noyon*, I (Paris, 1633), pp. 131–132.

⁷³ William Robertson, *The History of the reign of the Emperor Charles V. With a view of the progress of society in Europe: from the subversion of the Roman Empire to the beginning of the sixteenth century*. I used the complete work in one volume, ed. in New York (1836), p. 16.

names the sect of millenarians,⁷⁴ and quotes several times from the Annals of Baronius, to whom I have already referred as the originator of the idea of the terrors of the year 1000; but he does not deal with the year 1000 specifically.⁷⁵ In one of his minor writings, however, I have run across the following passage: "(Before the First Crusade) the opinion long spread among Christians, that the world was going to end, had, for about a hundred years, turned the faithful away from pilgrimage to Rome to pilgrimage to Jerusalem. . . . The world did not come to its close, and the Turks are masters of Jerusalem."⁷⁶

In the thirties of the nineteenth century the French historian Michelet, with appealing literary power, gave an eloquent and most effective description of the terrors and despair of the year 1000, which greatly impressed the imagination of his numerous readers.⁷⁷ A little later another French historian, Sismondi, wrote of the medieval world that the closer it approached that fatal term, i.e., the year 1000, the more the terror of the catastrophe overpowered its imagination. "This terror kept all the faithful feeling like a condemned man whose days are numbered and whose execution is approaching. . . . The belief in the approach of the end of the world may be considered one of the elements of the important revolution that was accomplished in the eleventh century."⁷⁸ A French man of letters, Paul Lacroix, writing in the middle of the nineteenth century, declared that towards the close of the tenth century all Christendom was struck with stupor and affright. "The end of the world being at hand" were the opening words of all deeds and contracts; and the vanities of the world being forgotten in the near approach of the supreme and inevitable catastrophe, every one was anxious to start for the Holy Land, in the hope of being present at the coming of the Saviour, and of

⁷⁴ Voltaire, *Essai sur les moeurs*, ch. XXI. *Oeuvres complètes de Voltaire*. Nouvelle éd. XI (Paris, 1878), p. 66.

⁷⁵ Cf. Voltaire, *Dictionnaire philosophique*, under the name *Fin du monde*: This idea of the end of our little world and of its revival struck especially the peoples subjected to the Roman Empire, in the horror of the civil wars of Caesar and Pompey. *Oeuvres complètes*, XIX (Paris, 1879), p. 142.

⁷⁶ Voltaire, *Quelques petites hardies de M. Clair à l'occasion d'un panégyrique de Saint Louis*. *Mélanges*, VII. *Oeuvres complètes*, XXVIII (Paris, 1879), p. 560.

⁷⁷ Jules Michelet, *Histoire de France*, 2d ed., II (Paris, 1835), 132–147.

⁷⁸ C. J. L. Simonde de Sismondi, *Histoire des Français*, II (Brussels, 1846), pp. 342–343.

finding there pardon for his sins, a peaceful death, and the salvation of his soul.⁷⁹

These French writers may have been betrayed by the brilliance of their literary talent into drawing a colorful and thrilling picture of the terrors of the year 1000, without realizing that it was greatly exaggerated. But it is surprising that in 1841 a German scholar and the first serious historian of the First Crusade, H. Sybel, shared their error. He wrote: "As the first thousand years of our calendar drew to an end, in every land of Europe the people expected with certainty the destruction of the world. Some squandered their substance in riotous living, others bestowed it for the salvation of their souls on churches and convents, wailing multitudes lay by day and by night about the altars, many looked with terror, yet most with a secret hope for the conflagration of the earth and the falling of the heavens." This passage is to be found in its entirety in the second edition of Sybel's book, which was printed in 1881, and of course in the third edition in 1900, an unaltered reproduction of the second.⁸⁰

In the second half of the nineteenth century a reaction against the "terrors" of the year 1000 manifested itself among historians. In the seventies Plaine wrote that the terrors of the year 1000 were only a myth,⁸¹ and Rosières called them pure legend imagined probably in the sixteenth century.⁸² In 1883 the German historian H. von Eicken entitled his study *The Legend of the Expectation of the Destruction of the World and of the Return of Christ in the year 1000*, though he admitted that in sporadic circles such a belief might have existed.⁸³ In 1885 a delightfully written book in French by J. Roy appeared, entitled *The Year 1000. Formation*.

⁷⁹ Paul Lacroix, *Military and Religious Life in the Middle Ages and at the period of the Renaissance* (New York, 1874), pp. 106-107.

⁸⁰ H. Sybel, *Geschichte des ersten Kreuzzuges*, 2d ed. (Leipzig, 1881), p. 150.

⁸¹ Dom Fr. Plaine, "Les prétendues terreurs de l'an mille," *Revue des questions historiques*, XIII (1873), 164; the whole article pp. 145-164.

⁸² R. Rosières, in *La Revue Bleue*, 2-e série, XIV (1878), no. 39, March 30, pp. 919-924. This article was reprinted in his *Recherches critiques sur l'histoire religieuse de la France* (Paris, 1879), pp. 135-163. *Idem*, *Histoire de la société française au moyen âge* (987-1483), 3d ed., II (Paris, 1884), p. 21, with reference to his second study just quoted.

⁸³ H. von Eicken, "Die Legende von der Erwartung des Weltuntergangs und der Wiederkehr Christi im Jahre 1000," *Forschungen zur Deutschen Geschichte*, XXIII (1883), p. 318; the whole article, pp. 303-318.

of the Legend of the Year 1000. Roy's main point is that European political life was the same before and after the year 1000. In Spain the terrors of the year 1000 failed to affect the superstitious imagination of the Arabs or to check their conquests. In France, King Robert was so little afraid of the general destruction of all things that he defied anathema. Not only did the Pope inflict upon him a penitence of seven years, but by common accord almost all the bishops of Gaul excommunicated both the King and the Queen. Thunderbolts of the church threw everywhere among the people so great a terror that many men kept away from Robert's company, and his servants regarded as defiled all the vessels from which the King ate or drank and cast into the fire the remnants from his table. The Emperor Otto III, like his famous contemporary Pope Sylvester II, believed in the duration of the world. There was not the least allusion to final catastrophe; no general fright or universal panic. The terrors of the year 1000, Roy concludes, are only a legend and myth of rather recent invention.⁸⁴ In 1887 after a careful study of sources and not overlooking Rosières' and Roy's contributions, P. Orsi concluded that Roy's results were almost identical with his own. "The terrors of the year 1000 are only a legend and a myth."⁸⁵ In 1891 E. Gebhart said that a legend had been created around the year 1000 whose historical element seems today very slight, and ended his elaborately written sketch with the following words: "It seems that Glaber lived at the bottom of the crypt of a Roman cathedral, by the glimmer of a sepulchral lamp, hearing only cries of distress and sobbing, his eye fixed on a procession of melancholy or terrible figures."⁸⁶ In 1901 the American historian, G. L. Burr, who died recently (1938), sharing of course the view of his predecessors on the legend of the year 1000, published a very clear survey of previous literature down to Orsi's study, and following A. Giry's book, whose title he does not give,⁸⁷ concluded:

⁸⁴ Jules Roy, *L'an mille. Formation de la légende de l'an mille. État de la France de l'an 950 à l'an 1050* (Paris, 1885), pp. 192–193, 194, 199, 204, 324 (Bibliothèque des merveilles publiée sous la direction de M. Ed. Charton).

⁸⁵ P. Orsi, "L'Anno Mille (Saggio di critica storica)," *Rivista Storica Italiana*, IV (1887), p. 56; the whole article, pp. 1–56.

⁸⁶ Emile Gebhart, "L'État d'âme d'un moine de l'an 1000. Le chroniqueur Raoul Glaber," *Revue des deux mondes*, October 1, 1891 (vol. CVII), pp. 600; 627–628; the whole article, pp. 600–628.

⁸⁷ A. Giry, *Manuel de diplomatique* (Paris, 1894), pp. 89–90.

"Nor may one forget that the Christian Calendar itself was yet a novel thing in the year 1000. The monk Dionysius had no authority to impose its adoption and it crept but slowly into use. Monkish chronicles had early begun to employ it; but the first pope to date by the Christian era his official letters was John XIII, scarce thirty years before the year 1000; and 'its use,' says the latest and highest authority, Arthur Giry, 'did not become general in the west of Europe till after the year 1000.' In Spain it was not used until the XIV century, and by Greek Christians not until the XV."⁸⁸ In 1908 a French writer, F. Duval, in his booklet *The Terrors of the Year 1000* reconsidered the question. Pointing out once more that our sources say nothing definite about the nearing destruction of the world in 1000, he wrote that the proximity of this year failed to stop activity or business, that the world did not tremble, and hence the conclusions concerning that period are false. "If the terrors of the year 1000," Duval says, "are a myth, who spread the legend? It is in the sixteenth century that the first mention of it appears." He refers here to Baronius and Le Vasseur. In conclusion Duval stresses his dispassionate-ness. "We have examined the texts without prejudice or bias. We have omitted none of them, and we do not believe that so large a collection (*un tel faisceau*) of facts in favor of the thesis that we considered, had ever before been collected." The terrors of the year 1000 are only a legend.⁸⁹ In his book *The Mediaeval Mind* (1925) H. O. Taylor dismisses the question of the year 1000 with a brief note: "For the early Middle Ages, in the decades just before and after the year one thousand, the mechanically super-natural view of any occurrence is illustrated in the five books of *Histories* of R. Glaber, an incontinent and wandering but observ-ing monk, native of Burgundy."⁹⁰

H. Pirenne, the famous Belgian historian, even ascribes to the tenth century the renewal of cooperative activity on the part of the people and the first symptoms of commercial renaissance. He writes: "From now on (from the tenth century), in feudal as well as in episcopal principalities, the first traces could be seen of an

⁸⁸ G. L. Burr, "The year 1000 and the antecedents of the Crusades," *American Historical Review*, VI (1900-1901), 436-437; the whole article, pp. 429-439.

⁸⁹ Frédéric Duval, *Les terreurs de l'an mille* (Paris, 1908), pp. 49; 70; 90. In his bibliography on the subject (pp. 91-92), Duval mentions neither Sybel nor Burr.

⁹⁰ H. O. Taylor, *The Mediaeval Mind* (4th ed., London, 1925), I, 504, note.

organized effort to better the condition of the people. Dark though the prospect still was, the tenth century nevertheless saw in outline the picture which the eleventh century presents. The famous legend of the terrors of the year 1000 is not devoid, in this respect, of symbolic significance. It is doubtless untrue that men expected the end of the world in the year 1000. Yet the century which came in at that date is characterized, in contrast with the preceding one, by a recrudescence of activity so marked that it could pass for the vigorous and joyful awakening of a society long oppressed by a nightmare of anguish. In every demesne was to be seen the same burst of energy and, for that matter, of optimism.⁹¹ A little later Pirenne says: "In the tenth century, the first symptoms of commercial renaissance are noted."⁹² A French historian, A. Fliche, after repeating most of Pirenne's first passage, adds: "There is indeed a real renaissance about this time (the year 1000). It does not commence at the same moment in all countries; it differs in the intensity with which it affects various branches of human activity, but it touches (*effleure*) all of them and announces the beginning of a new era. To the descending curve which the Occidental world had previously followed, succeeds, here from the end of the tenth century, there at the beginning of the eleventh, an ascending curve."⁹³ In the revised edition of his *Guide to the Study of Medieval History*, which was published in 1931, L. J. Paetow inserted a special section, *Legend of the year 1000*, in which he gives a list of previous publications on the subject.⁹⁴ In K. S. Latourette's *The Thousand Years of Uncertainty* there is no mention of the year 1000.⁹⁵

Perhaps it is worth mentioning that the question of the year 1000 as "the fiction of a great catastrophe" was discussed with references to previous writings in a recent American textbook on Mediaeval History. The author, E. M. Hulme, says that previous studies have dispelled all doubts as to its legendary character, and

⁹¹ H. Pirenne, *Medieval Cities. Their origin and the revival of trade* (Princeton, 1925), pp. 79–80. Idem, *Les villes du moyen âge* (Brussels, 1927), pp. 71–72.

⁹² Pirenne, *Les villes du moyen âge*, p. 96.

⁹³ A. Fliche, *L'Europe Occidentale de 888 à 1125* (Paris, 1930), p. 597.

⁹⁴ L. J. Paetow, *Guide to the study of medieval history* (revised ed., New York, 1931), 396.

⁹⁵ Kenneth Scott Latourette, *The Thousand Years of Uncertainty, A.D. 500 to A.D. 1500 (A History of the expansion of Christianity, vol. II)*, New York, 1938.

that no such widespread and paralyzing terror afflicted the people of that time.⁹⁶

There can be no question that the terrors of the year 1000 which supposedly overwhelmingly affected the entire European West are mere fiction. Dionysius' era at that time was not yet accepted by the masses. As we have noted above, official documents began to be dated according to this era in the middle of the eighth century, and the popes started to use it in the second half of the tenth century, not long before the year 1000. Of course here and there this era was already known by groups of people who were aware of the approach of the year 1000, and this unusual date may have aroused uneasiness, doubts, and even fear among some uneducated people and rude monks. In several places outbursts of restlessness and despair may have occurred. But these scattered manifestations are a far cry from the general hopeless and distressing situation so dramatically and effectively described by many writers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

I wish to emphasize here that the most important historical figures in the West at the end of the tenth and the beginning of the eleventh century were not at all apprehensive of the end of the world and paid no attention to the coming of a new millennium. In the year 1000 at Aix-la-Chapelle the Holy Roman Emperor and young enthusiast, Otto III, did not hesitate to open the tomb of Charlemagne, in which he placed the famous silk textile of Byzantine production. In the same year Pope Sylvester II, one of the most learned men of the Middle Ages, conferred upon the first Christian King of Hungary, Saint Stephen, the title of Apostolic Majesty.

Since in the Christian East Dionysius' era was not used during the Middle Ages and was first introduced only after the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the year 1000 after the incarnation of Christ according to Dionysius' era was simply ignored. But we have a very interesting passage in the history of Leo the Deacon compiled just before the year 1000. He gives a detailed description of the comet that appeared in August, 975;⁹⁷ shortly after, on January 10, 976, the Emperor John Tzimisces died. Leo the

⁹⁶ E. M. Hulme, *The Middle Ages* (revised ed., New York, 1938), p. 339.

⁹⁷ Leo Diaconus, X, 6; ed. Bonn, p. 168. Leo the Deacon used the Roman or Byzantine era.

Deacon relates: "Seeing the unusual portent, the Emperor asked those who were engaged in observing the heavenly bodies what such an extraordinary phenomenon meant. They explained the appearance of the comet not as science would interpret it but according to the Emperor's desire, promising him victory against enemies and length of days. These interpreters were the Logothete and Magister Symeon and the Archbishop of Nicomedia Stephen, the wisest men among the sages of that period. But the appearance of the comet intimated not that which they explained to the Emperor to please him; (on the contrary it portended) disastrous revolts, invasions, civil wars, emigration from cities and country, famines and plagues, terrific earthquakes, and the almost utter destruction of the Roman Empire, as we have seen from subsequent events."⁹⁸

Leo the Deacon wrote his history at the end of the tenth century, probably before 991, when the Emperor Basil II was beginning to overcome the hitherto victorious Bulgarians⁹⁹ and when a new era of Byzantine military successes and glory was inaugurated. In other words, the pessimistic and despairing picture of the situation in the Byzantine Empire which Leo the Deacon so drastically described in the passage quoted above was drawn just before the year 1000; and in the long list of various disasters that fell upon the Empire at that time, none was interpreted by Leo as foreboding the final world catastrophe.¹⁰⁰ On

⁹⁸ Leo Diaconus, X, 6; ed. Bonn, pp. 168–169. I give the last words of the translated passage: *καὶ πανωλεθρίαν σχεδὸν τῆς Ῥωμαϊκῆς ἐπικρατεῖας ἀπερ ημεῖς ἐκ τῆς τῶν πραγμάτων ἐκβάσεως εἰδομεν* (p. 169). The passage was translated into Russian by V. Vasilevski, "From the history of the years 976–986," *Works*, II, 1 (St. Petersburg, 1909), pp. 56–57; into French by G. Schlumberger, *L'Épopée byzantine*, I (Paris, 1896), 768. This comet is also mentioned but without interpretation by the younger contemporary of Leo the Deacon, the Armenian historian Stephen Asokhik of Taron. According to him, the comet might have predicted the Emperor's death. *The Universal History of Stepanos of Taron surnamed Asokhik*, translated into Russian by N. Emin (Moscow, 1864), p. 130. *Des Stephanos von Taron Armenische Geschichte*, III, 10, translated by H. Gelzer and A. Burckhardt (Leipzig, 1907), p. 137. *Histoire Universelle par Etienne Asolik de Taron*, III, 10, trad. et annotée par Fr. Macler. Sec. part. Book III (Paris, 1917), pp. 48–49 (*Publications de l'École des Langues Orientales Vivantes*, vol. XVIII bis).

⁹⁹ On the question when Leo the Deacon wrote his history see M. Suzumov, "On the Sources of Leo the Deacon and Scylitzes," *Vizantiskoe Obozrenie*, II, 1 (Yuryev, 1916), pp. 136–139 (in Russian).

¹⁰⁰ In a recent Russian novel Leo the Deacon's passage given above is paraphrased with the addition of the following words, "perhaps foreboding the end of the

the contrary the year 1000 may be regarded as the turning point in the military history of the Byzantine Empire, when, after the repression of the revolts of Bardas Phocas and Bardas Sclerus, Basil II succeeded in winning over the Bulgarians and ended his triumphant campaigns by the annexation of Bulgaria in 1018. Plaine, whose article on the year 1000 has already been mentioned above, shows an amusing misconception on this point. "In Constantinople," Plaine writes, "the imperial dignity was very precarious; ambitious men, however, did not fail to covet it, even at the approach of the year 1000."¹⁰¹

Let us see now what the attitude was among the population of the new capital of the Byzantine Empire towards its future.

In 330 under Constantine the Great the new capital of the Empire was officially dedicated on the shores of the Bosphorus; Christian Constantinople was superimposed upon pagan Byzantium. The new Christian Byzantium had no illusions concerning her eternity. From the early times of her political existence and through the Middle Ages she was concerned about her end and was convinced that her historical life was limited and her eventual ruin certain. "Such a pessimism is rarely seen in a people," writes Ch. Diehl, "especially when it manifests itself, as is the case with the Mediaeval Greeks, at the most brilliant moment of their history, at the epoch of the great Macedonian emperors or that of the Comneni. . . . This sentiment of pessimism knew and accepted, without resisting or complaining, a limited destiny for the capital and monarchy, and stoically awaited the final day."¹⁰²

A Byzantine legend of the twelfth century relates that after the foundation of Constantinople, according to the usage of the founders of cities, Constantine consulted the famous astrologer and mathematician, Vettius Valens,¹⁰³ as to how long the new city

world," A. Ladinsky, *A Dove over the Pontus* (*Golub nad Pontom*), Tallinn (Reval), 1938, p. 8.

¹⁰¹ D. F. Plaine, "Les prétendues terreurs de l'an mille," *Revue des questions historiques*, XIII (1873), 162.

¹⁰² Ch. Diehl, "De quelques croyances byzantines sur la fin de Constantinople," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, XXX (1929-1930), 192-193, 196. Cf. F. Dölger, "Rom in der Gedankenwelt der Byzantiner," *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte*, LVI (1937), 3, n. I.

¹⁰³ There were several doctors and astrologers of the name of Vettius Valens. See A. Bouché-Leclercq, *L'astrologie grecque* (Paris, 1899), p. XIII. But Vettius Valens, whose legendary prediction is connected with the founding of Constanti-

would exist. Valens cast a horoscope and prophesied that the city would last 696 years; this placed the end of Constantinople in the year 1026 ($330 + 696$). The Byzantine chroniclers of the twelfth century, Cedrenus, Zonaras, and Michael Glycas (Glykas),¹⁰⁴ who told the story, of course realized that in spite of Valens' prophecy the city was continuing to exist and prosper in the twelfth century, over a hundred years after the fatal year 1026. It is interesting to observe Zonaras' attitude on this point. He writes: "Either it is to be supposed that Valens' prediction and his science are false, or it is to be thought that he meant those years when the institutions of the Empire would be maintained, preserved, when the Senate would be honored, the citizens flourish, the imperial power law-giving; when there would be no manifest tyranny in which rulers regarded public things as their private affairs and used them for their own, not always pure, enjoyments; in which they granted public means to whomsoever they wished, treating their subjects not like shepherds who shear superfluous wool and drink milk sparingly, but like brigands who kill their own sheep and devour their meat and even squeeze out the very marrow."¹⁰⁵ In his chronicle Michael Glycas plainly says that Valens' prediction was false and therefore his science was proved false.¹⁰⁶ Emperor Manuel I Comnenus (1143–1180), who was fond of astrology, wrote a defense of it in the form of a *Letter* to a monk of the monastery of the Pantokrator in Constantinople, who had "disparaged astronomic science and called its study impiety."¹⁰⁷ In order to show that astronomy — astrology to his mind — was quite consistent with Christianity, Manuel in his *Letter* reminded the monk of the fact that Constantine, "the

noble, lived probably under the Antonines, in the second century A.D. See *Catalogus codicum astrologorum graecorum*, II (Brussels, 1900), 86; also I (Brussels, 1898), 79; V, pars prior (Brussels, 1904), 118, n. 2. F. Cumont, *Astrology and Religion among the Greeks and Romans* (New York, 1912), p. 62 (under the Antonines).

¹⁰⁴ Cedrenus, I, 497. Zonaras, *Epitome*, XIII, 3, 6–9; ed. Bonn, III, 14–15. Michael Glycas, *Annales*, IV; ed. Bonn, 463. See D. Lathoud, "La consécration et la dédicace de Constantinople," *Echos d'Orient*, XXIV (1925), 191.

¹⁰⁵ Zonaras, XIII, 3, 6–9; ed. Bonn, III, 15. S. Diehl, "De quelques croyances," *Byz. Zeitsch.*, XXX (1929–30), 193.

¹⁰⁶ Michael Glycas, IV, ed. Bonn, 463. See Diehl, *ibidem*.

¹⁰⁷ The text of the *Letter* in the *Catalogus codicum astrologorum graecorum*, V, pars I (Brussels, 1904), pp. 108–125. On Manuel's interest in astrology and his writings on the subject see *ibidem*, 106–108.

father of the emperors and Apostle," willing to found "this our New Rome" and being anxious that the new city might remain impregnable for ever (*μέχρι παντός*) and increasing in religion, he used that science; he had asked "the wisest Valens" to draw an appropriate horoscope. "If (Constantine) had known that this science was heretical, that Christ-loving Emperor, the Apostle among Apostles and zealous follower of piety, as well as the most pious emperors who followed him and the archbishops . . . would not have used it at important moments. . . . We set ourselves against your crude and uneducated pronouncement."¹⁰⁸ Since Manuel of course realized that Valens' prediction had failed, he does not mention the exact figure of 696 years supposedly fixed by the famous astrologer and in his energetic defense of astrology points out Constantine's desire to see his new capital impregnable for ever; or, as Diehl says, "Some, like Manuel Comnenus, escaped the difficulty by interpreting the prediction in a broader sense and endeavoring to find in it at all costs a promise of eternity for the capital."¹⁰⁹

Besides his chronicle Michael Glycas wrote *A Special Apology in reply to the writing of our powerful and holy Emperor Manuel Comnenus that was sent to a certain monk who had cast great blame upon (the Emperor) for the study of astrology, and where the latter eagerly contended to justify such a study by physical and written proofs* (*φυσικάς καὶ γραφικάς ἀποδείξεων*).¹¹⁰ In this *Special Apology* in a lengthy and intricate passage, Glycas tells the story of Valens' supposed (*ῶς φασιν*) prediction, but concludes that since the prophecy was not realized, astrological science must be considered false.¹¹¹

But it must be noted that the scepticism of Zonaras and Glycas failed to affect the belief of the people in general. In the twelfth century, as before, the masses continued to believe that Constantinople and the Empire would end; and they based that conviction

¹⁰⁸ *Cat. cod. astr. gr.*, V, 1, pp. 118–119.

¹⁰⁹ Diehl, *op. cit.*, 193.

¹¹⁰ This apology is printed in *Catalogus codicum astrologorum graecorum*, V, 1, pp. 125–140. On Glycas' writings against astrology see *ibidem*, 107–108, 140–141. See also K. Krumbacher, "Michael Glykas," *Sitzungsber. der philos.-philolog. und histor. Cl. der Akad. der Wiss. zu München*, 1894, pp. 437–438. *Idem*, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur*, 1897, p. 384.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 131–132. The exact date of the compilation of this letter is unknown. It was probably written in the last years of Manuel's reign. Manuel died in 1180. Krumbacher, "Michael Glykas," p. 438.

not only on the stars, but also, and perhaps more strongly, on the inscriptions on numerous monuments that adorned their city. Additional information on this subject may be gleaned from a source that has only recently begun to be studied, that is, Byzantine mantic books.

In a very interesting study on Byzantino-Slavonic mantic books (1930) M. A. Andreeva characterized our knowledge of these sources as "discouraging." She wrote: "Of numerous Byzantine brontologia, seismologia and lunaria nothing has been published, although enormous numbers of them are preserved in the Libraries of Western Europe and the Orient. It is sufficient to run through the catalogue of the manuscripts preserved on Mount Athos to realize this."¹¹² At that time Miss Andreeva was not yet acquainted with the nine volumes of the precious *Catalogus Codicum Astrologorum Graecorum*, although they were published before the year 1930. If she had been, she would not have been so discouraged. In her later studies on the same subject she used volumes I–XI of the Catalogue (1932) and derived from them much interesting and important data.¹¹³ According to Miss Andreeva, the mantic books or books of divination were compiled during the Hellenistic period on the basis of information from still more ancient sources. They were collected and a little modified according to the taste and political and social interests of the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries A.D., and they underwent a new transformation in the seventh to twelfth centuries. This process may be summarized as the popularization and abridgment of ancient mantic books. The editors continued to compose new prognostics adapted to the political and social life of the epoch and these sometimes reflected historical facts. It is to this second epoch of the evolution of Byzantine mantic books that the composition of brontologia and seismologia falsely attributed to Heraclius and Leo the Wise belongs. The third and last stage of evolution of

¹¹² M. A. Andreeva, "The political and social element in Byzantine-Slavonic mantic books," *Byzantinoslavica*, II, 1 (Prague, 1930), 49 (in Russian with a French résumé). She refers here to Sp. Lambros' *Catalogue of the Greek manuscripts on Mount Athos*, I–II (Cambridge, 1895–1900).

¹¹³ Volumes I–VIII and X of the *Catalogus* were published in 1924. If I am not mistaken, vol. IX has never come out. Vol. XI, part I was printed in 1932; XI, part II in 1934, and vol. XII in 1936. M. A. Andreeva's latest study, "On the history of Byzantino-Slavonic mantic books," came out in *Byzantinoslavica*, V (1933), 120–161.

Byzantine mantic books may be approximately dated from the outset of the thirteenth century to the end of the Byzantine Empire. During this time in addition to the types of mantic books that had existed in earlier periods some new types appeared. The prognostics added under the *Palaeologi* have a strongly marked social character. In addition to the *brontologia* based upon the Zodiac prognostics often appear according to the Calends of some month (*Calandologia*), which indicates Roman influence.¹¹⁴

Let us turn now to Constantinopolitan monuments.^{114*}

To embellish the new capital Constantine and his successors removed masterpieces of art from many pagan sanctuaries and transferred them to Constantinople, which became a most wonderful museum. In the superstitious popular imagination these masterpieces, especially the statues, possessed mysterious meaning, serving as talismans that guaranteed the security of the city and particularly as presages that announced its ruin.¹¹⁵ In this connection a little book on the origin of Constantinople, *Πάτρια Κωνσταντινουπόλεως*, which was quoted above, contains interesting material. Its text is full of descriptions of many Constantinopolitan monuments which, according to the interpretation of the superstitious masses of the capital, referred to its future and unavoidable ruin. Mysterious inscriptions and obscure bas-reliefs on the monuments announced the last days of the city, *τὰ ἔσχατα τῆς πόλεως, τὰς ἔσχάτας ιστορίας τῆς πόλεως*.¹¹⁶ On the statues of various animals which decorated the quarter of Artopolia, "hieroglyphic and astronomical" signs foretold "with names" all the future fortunes of the city.¹¹⁷ On the forum of Taurus was an equestrian statue that had been brought from "Great Antioch." In the rider some identified Bellerophon, others Joshua the son of

¹¹⁴ M. A. Andreeva, *loc. cit.*, V (1933), 120–131; 159–160.

^{114*} A. Kirpichnikov's Russian study "Miraculous Statues in Constantinople," *Letopis* of the Historico-philological Society of the University of Novorossisk, IV, Byzantine section, II (Odessa, 1894), 23–47, fails to mention the question of the end of the world.

¹¹⁵ See Ch. Diehl, "De quelques croyances," *Byz. Zeitschrift*, XXX (1929–1930), 192. *Idem*, "La société byzantine à l'époque des Comnènes," *Revue historique du sud-est européen*, VI (1929), 261; separate edition, 70.

¹¹⁶ *Scriptores originum Constantinopolitanarum*, recensuit Th. Preger, II (Leipzig, 1907), 176–177. See also Diehl, *loc. cit.*, p. 194.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 175: *ἱερογλυφικὰ καὶ ἀστρονομικὰ δύτα τῶν μελλόντων δηλούστας τὰς ιστορίας πάσας σὺν τῶν δυνατῶν*. Diehl, *loc. cit.*, p. 194 and n. 8.

Nun; but everybody agreed that the bas-reliefs sculptured on the pedestal of the statue foretold "stories of the last days of the city when the Russians should destroy Constantinople."¹¹⁸ The prediction that the Russians would destroy Constantinople is very interesting. It shows that at the close of the tenth century when the *Patria* was compiled danger from Russia was stronger in the popular imagination than danger from Bulgaria. In spite of the peaceful visit of the Russian Grand Princess Olga to Constantinople in 957, the marriage of the Russian Prince Vladimir to Anna, sister of the Emperors Basil II and Constantine VIII, and the conversion of Russia to Orthodox Christianity, nevertheless the victorious attack upon Constantinople of the Russian Prince Oleg in 907 and Sviatoslav's brilliant though temporary military successes in the seventies of the same century were not yet effaced from the memory of the Empire. It should be remembered that the unsuccessful expedition of the Russian Prince Igor upon Constantinople in 941 was recorded in Byzantine mantic books, showing once more how deeply danger from Russia affected the imagination of the masses.¹¹⁹ To return to other monuments in the capital. The column at Xerolophos was inscribed with the announcement of "the last destinies and captures of the city."¹²⁰ On a column in Philadelphion were bas-reliefs and inscriptions predicting the end of the Empire.¹²¹ The four statues set up in the harbour *ai Σοφίαι* had inscriptions predicting the future.¹²² On various statues of the Hippodrome could be read "the truth about the last destinies."¹²³

Volume X of the *Catalogus Codicum Astrologorum Graecorum*

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 176: ἐγγεγλυμένας *Ιστορίας* τῶν ἐσχάτων τῆς πόλεως, τῶν 'Ρῶν τῶν μελλόντων πορθεῖν αὐτὴν τὴν πόλιν. Diehl, *loc. cit.*, p. 195.

¹¹⁹ *Catalogus codicum astrologorum graecorum*, III. *Codices Mediolanenses*, ed. A. Martini et Domenico Bassi (Brussels, 1901), p. 26, 1. 21 sq. See M. A. Andreeva, *loc. cit.*, p. 138 (in Russian).

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 176-177: τὰς ἐσχάτας *Ιστορίας* τῆς πόλεως καὶ τὰς ἀλώσεις ἔχουσιν ἐν*Ιστορίας* ἐγγεγλυμένας. Diehl, *loc. cit.*, 195. See also *Scr. orig.*, 180, 16-18.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 178: (Κωνσταντίνος) ἐποίησεν δὲ εἰς τὸν κίονα ἑκείνον *Ιστορίας* τὰς ἀντοῦ ἐνξώδους καὶ γράμματα Ῥωμαῖοι τὰ ἐσχάτα σημαίνοντα. Diehl, *loc. cit.*, 194. I prefer the version of the Bonn edition (p. 44): ἐποίει δὲ καὶ τὸν κίονα ἑκείνον, *Ιστορίας* ἔχοντα ἐν αὐτῷ ἐνξώδους, καὶ γράμματα Ῥωμαῖοι τὰ ἐσχάτα σημαίνοντα.

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 184: εἴχον δὲ γράμματα τῶν μελλόντων. See also p. 230, 24.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 189, 20: ἔχωσιν τὸ ἀλάθητον τῶν ἐσχάτων. Concerning the word ἀλάθητον Preger remarks: "eodem sensu ni fallor quo τὸ ἀληθές." See also *Scr. orig.*, 191, 14-15: τῶν ἐσχάτων ἡμερῶν καὶ τῶν μελλόντων εἰσὶν πᾶσαι *ai Ιστορίαι*.

contains several predictions concerning Constantinople, which is called mostly ἡ Πόλις. Two oracles incorrectly attributed to Leo the Wise mention the coming desolation and restoration of Constantinople.¹²⁴ Some brontologia predict the strength of Constantinople, the might of its men and chiefs, and the destruction of the locusts.¹²⁵ One brontologion foretells a famine in Constantinople,¹²⁶ others joy in the capital,¹²⁷ or even great joy over the whole world.¹²⁸ A seismologion falsely attributed to the Emperor Leo the Wise prophesies distress and oppression in Constantinople.¹²⁹ One brontologion bluntly foretells the capture of Constantinople.¹³⁰ None of these examples indicates any expectation of the end of the world; many of them, indeed, are hazy and vague.

Of course all these mysterious bas-reliefs and inscriptions were obscure to the populace. Only men experienced in the art of interpreting oracles were able to understand them; and the book *Πάτρια* calls such men either *οἱ πεπειραμένοι* or *οἱ ἔχοντες δοκιμὴν τῶν στηλωτικῶν τῶν ἀποτελεσμάτων* or *οἱ στηλωτικοὶ τῶν ἀποτελεσμάτων*, who understand all these things (*ταῦτα πάντα συνιᾶσιν*).¹³¹ It must be admitted, however, that these interpreters in spite of their experience explained the oracles only after the events had happened. The testimony of a Western historian of the Fourth Crusade and the conquest of Constantinople by the Franks in 1204, Robert de Clari, is very interesting on this point. He writes: "Still another great marvel. There were two columns. . . . On the outside of these columns there were pictured and written by prophecy all the events and all the conquests which have happened in Constantinople or which were going to happen. But no one could understand the event until it had happened, and when it had happened the people would go there and ponder over it, and

¹²⁴ *Cat. cod. astr. gr. X. Codices Athenienses descripsit Armandus Delatte* (Brussels, 1924), p. 27. These two oracles are printed in Migne, *P.G.*, CVII, 1129–1138 and 1149.

¹²⁵ *eis τὴν Πόλιν στερέωμα, ἔξονσία ἀνδρῶν τε καὶ ἀρχόντων, ἀκρίδων φθορά*, p. 61, 6–7; also pp. 130; 141.

¹²⁶ P. 61. Another brontologion (p. 131) predicts a famine and destruction of the people (*ἀπώλειαν δῆλοι*) in Constantinople.

¹²⁷ P. 141: *eis τὴν Πόλιν χαρά.*

¹²⁸ P. 130: *έὰν βροντήσῃ . . . χαρὰ πολλὴ τῇ οἰκουμένῃ ἔσται.*

¹²⁹ P. 135: *στενοχωρίᾳ καὶ θλῖψις τῇ Πόλει.*

¹³⁰ P. 141: *'Εὰν βροντήσῃ, ἀλωσίς Πόλεως.*

¹³¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 179, 191, 206. Diehl, *loc. cit.*, p. 195.

then for the first time they would see and understand the event. And even this conquest of the French was written and pictured there and the ships in which they made the assault when the city was taken, and the Greeks were not able to understand it before it had happened, but when it had happened they went to look at these columns and ponder over it, and they found that the letters which were written on the pictured ships said that a people, short haired (*haut tondue*) and with iron swords, would come from the West to conquer Constantinople.”¹³² Another famous French historian and participant in the crusade, Villehardouin, wrote on the same subject: “Now hear of a great marvel! On that column from which Mourzuphles fell were images of divers kinds, wrought in the marble. And among these images was one, worked in the shape of an emperor, falling headlong; for of a long time it had been prophesied that from that column an emperor of Constantinople should be cast down. So did the semblance and the prophecy come true.”¹³³

The Crusaders took Constantinople twice, in 1203 and in 1204; in the latter year they not only took but mercilessly sacked the city and pillaged it of all the treasures which had been collected there for many centuries. In spite of this tragic fall of Constantinople to foreigners — the first fall in its history¹³⁴ — the world failed to end, and fifty-seven years later Constantinople became once more the capital of an empire restored though on a very reduced scale.

Recently a young Greek scholar, D. Xanalatos, referring to the fall of Constantinople to the Crusaders in 1204, wrote: “The end of the Empire was expected, i.e., according to the view of that time the end of the world as well, and we cannot be surprised that in the year 1204 the number of the defenders of the capital against the Franks was very small, so that the Frankish assailants could

¹³² Robert de Clari, *La conquête de Constantinople*, ed. P. Lauer (Paris, 1924), p. 89 (ch. 92). *The Conquest of Constantinople*. Translated from the Old French of Robert of Clari by Edgar H. McNeal (New York, 1936), pp. 110–111. See L. Oeconomos, *La vie religieuse dans l'empire byzantin au temps des Comnènes et des Anges* (Paris, 1918), pp. 98–100. Ch. Diehl, “De quelques croyances,” *Byz. Zeitschrift*, XXX (1929–30), 195–196.

¹³³ Geoffroi de Ville-Hardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, éd. Natalis de Wailly (Paris, 1872), p. 133 (ch. 308). See also Robert de Clari, ed. Lauer, p. 104 (ch. 109); translation by McNeal, p. 124. See Diehl, *op. cit.*, p. 196.

¹³⁴ In 1203 the city was returned to the Greeks.

easily seize the capital.”¹³⁵ This rather sweeping statement, I believe, has little solid basis, because there is no serious ground for presuming that the fear of general catastrophe before 1204 was so overwhelming that it could affect the number of the defenders of Constantinople. Moreover we have an account of the siege and capture of the city written by an eyewitness, the famous French historian Villehardouin. I give his statement here, but we must bear in mind that he may very possibly have exaggerated in order to emphasize the valour and strength of the crusading armies. He writes: “Then the Emperor Alexius issued from the city, with all his forces . . . and so many began to issue forth that it seemed as if the whole world were there assembled.”¹³⁶

One hundred and ninety-two years later, in 1453, the final catastrophe occurred. The Turks conquered Constantinople. The world still continued to exist, but the idea that it would end some time within human calculation still survived.

In later Greek literature after the fall of Constantinople the end of the world was generally expected in 1492 or sometimes in 1493–1494, which was the year 7000 from the creation of the world according to the Byzantine or Roman era. This era, as we know, counted its first year from September 1, 5509 b.c. to September 1, 5508; 5508 added to 1492 gives 7000.

On this subject the works of Gennadius Scholarius are significant. Gennadius Scholarius (his secular name was George), the last great polemist of the Byzantine church, a great scholar in theology and philosophy, and the first patriarch of Constantinople under the Turkish power, “the last Byzantine and the first Hellene,”¹³⁷ was the author of a very great number of various works that were recently published in eight volumes, averaging about 530 pages each.¹³⁸ In several of his writings he deals with

¹³⁵ D. Xanalatos, *Wirtschaftliche Aufbau- und Autarkiemassnamen im 13. Jahrhundert. (Nikäniisches Reich 1204-1261)*, *Leipziger Vierteljahrsschrift für Südosteuropa*, III, Heft 2 (1939), 131. No references are given in this article.

¹³⁶ Villehardouin, *La conquête de Constantinople*, § 177; ed. N. de Wailly (Paris, 1872), p. 101; ed. Edmond Faral, I (Paris, 1938), pp. 178–179. See also the second appendix of Faral’s excellent edition of Villehardouin, where he gives from various sources many interesting figures on the troops before Constantinople in 1203 (I, 221–226).

¹³⁷ C. Sathas, *Documents inédits relatifs à l’histoire de la Grèce au moyen âge*, IV (Paris, 1883), p. vii and note 7.

¹³⁸ Among recent essays on Gennadius Scholarius, see M. Jugie, “Georges

the idea of the approaching final catastrophe. In his *Panegyric of the Holy Apostles*, written in 1456, he warns his listeners: "Behold, brethren, the form of this world has past; the fixed time for its end is at hand."¹³⁹ In his sermon at the feast of the Decollation of Saint John the Baptist, delivered in 1466, Gennadius Scholarius says: "The beginning of the second advent of Christ is clearly seen. . . . Before long, as we may well conjecture, He will return to the world in glory in order to judge and put an end to all human matters."¹⁴⁰ In his brief *Apology of the Antiunionists*, he writes: "The end, that is, the change of this world is at hand, as one can see from circumstances."¹⁴¹ In his work on *Miracles* he says: "All signs of the end are now manifestly at work."¹⁴² He tells more precisely of the coming end of the world in the year 7000 in his *Refutation of the Judaic Error*, written in 1464, where we read: "They said that this seventh chiliad was really already near its completion . . . and, as is stated in the Divine and Holy Scripture, it is true that the whole world of mortal and corruptible matter shall be entirely destroyed by fire."¹⁴³ In his writing on the *Second Advent of our Lord and the Resurrection of the Dead*, Gennadius Scholarius after indicating signs predicting the Last Judgment, once more emphasizes that

Scholarios, professeur de philosophie." *Studi bizantini e neoellenici*, V (Roma, 1939), pp. 482–494. Άδ. Διαμαντοπούλου Γεννάδιος ὁ Σχολάριος, ὡς ιστορικὴ πηγὴ τῶν περὶ τὴν ἀλώσιν χρόνων, 'Ελληνικά, IX (1936), 285–308. A detailed study of Gennadius Scholarius' biography, activities, and literary achievement is urgently needed.

¹³⁹ *Oeuvres complètes de Gennade Scholarios* publiées pour la première fois par L. Petit, X. A. Sideridès, M. Jugie, I (Paris, 1928), p. 184: Ίδον, ἀδελφοί, τὸ σχῆμα τοῦ κόσμου τούτου παρῆλθε· ἡ προθεσμία τῆς συντελείας ἔστιν ἐγγύς.

¹⁴⁰ *Oeuvres*, I, 211: τῶν δὲ προοιμίων τῆς δευτέρας τοῦ Χριστοῦ παρουσίας ἐναργῶς φαινομένων . . . μετ' ὀλίγον, ὡς εἰκάζειν ἔστι καλῶς, ἐνδόξως ἐπανήκειν μέλλων τῷ κόσμῳ καὶ κρίσιν καὶ τέλος τῶν ἀνθρωπείων πάντων πραγμάτων.

¹⁴¹ *Oeuvres*, III (Paris, 1930), 94: Τὸ τέλος εἴτον ἡ μεταβολὴ τοῦ δε τοῦ κόσμου ἐγγύς, ὡς ἐκ τῶν πραγμάτων ἔστιν δρᾶν. This text is also printed in Migne, P.G., CLX, 713–732.

¹⁴² *Oeuvres*, III, 383, 10: τὰ δὲ σημεῖα τῆς καταπαύσεως νῦν ἐνεργεῖται πάντα προδήλως; see also p. 388, 14.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 288: Τὸ μὲν οὖν τὴν ἑβδόμην χιλιάδα ταῦτην εἶναι ἐγγὺς ἥδη τοῦ τελειօνθατο τυγχάνονταν ἀληθῶς εἰπον ἐκεῖνοι . . . καὶ τὸ διὰ πυρὸς ἀφανισθήσεσθαι τὴν περὶ τὴν γῆν φύσιν πάσαν τῶν γεννητῶν καὶ φθαρτῶν παντάπασιν ἔστιν ἀληθὲς, ὡς τῇ θείᾳ καὶ λεπῇ Γραφῇ βεβαιούμενον. See Franz Cumont's note *De septem mundi aetatibus*, *Catalogus codicum astrologorum graecorum*, IV (Brussels, 1903), 113–114; also VIII, 3 (Brussels, 1912), 199.

the world will be destroyed by the fire of a universal conflagration.¹⁴⁴ Among his pastoral and ascetic works, there is the *Personal Apology*, written in 1464 and addressed to his intimate friend, Theodore Branas; in it Gennadius Scholarius says that every one knows well the prophecies of the end of time.¹⁴⁵ A versatile theologian and scholar whose numerous works embraced almost all branches of literature, Gennadius Scholarius wrote in 1472 a brief historical essay, a curious *Chronography*, published for the first time in 1935 from his own autograph manuscript, which is preserved in Paris (*Parisinus 1289*). This very brief *Chronography*, which occupies only nine pages of printed text, goes from Adam to the year 1472 A.D. and announces the end of the world in the year 1493–1494, which, according to his computation, coincides with the end of the seventh millennium from the creation of man.¹⁴⁶

We read:¹⁴⁷ “In all probability, indeed, the close of the seventh chiliad (millennium) will be the completion of the works of God, that is the end¹⁴⁸ of mortal things and the close of their activities according to divine providence. Now the completion of the seventh chiliad is drawing near and the end of the last and seventh empire; so that, indeed, very soon will begin the eighth and everlasting age and the eighth and true empire which are expected by those who are very familiar with the Scriptures, where all this matter has been explained; and with pious faith they devote themselves to the Scriptures. According to the Septuagint¹⁴⁹ twenty-one years from now . . . will complete the seventh chiliad; according to Joseph, twice as many, that is, forty-one. The Lord knows the future. But relying more on the record of the Septuagint and observing the signs of the end (of the world) that have already been given, we prefer of these two (periods) the shorter, that is the twentieth . . .” (here the manuscript breaks off).

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 333 (§ 3), 334–336 (§ 4).

¹⁴⁵ *Oeuvres*, IV (Paris, 1935), 270 (§ 5): οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἀγνοεῖ τὰ περὶ τῶν ἑσχάτων καιρῶν προγνοευμένα. On Gennadius' friend, Theodore Branas, s. p. XVI–XVII.

¹⁴⁶ See *Oeuvres*, IV, XXIX; the *Chronography*, pp. 504–512.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 511–512.

¹⁴⁸ In the printed text η λέξις. I read η λῆξις.

¹⁴⁹ κατὰ μὲν τὸν Ἐβδομήκοντα, i.e., those seventy (or seventy-two) competent scholars who, according to tradition, translated the Old Testament into Greek in Egypt in the third century B.C.

The idea that the world would end in 1492 travelled from Byzantium to Russia, where the Byzantine era, which begins with September 1, 5509 B.C., was in general use. At the outset of the fifteenth century the Metropolitan of Moscow, Photius, wrote an encyclical letter to the Metropolitan of Kiev on the illegal ordination of Gregory Zamblak by a Lithuanian bishop; in this letter (1415–1416) he wrote that the end of time was at hand.¹⁵⁰ In the interpolated Slavonic version of the so-called *Revelation* of Methodius of Patara, or of Pseudo-Methodius, we discover the same idea of the end of the world in the year 7000 of the creation of the world, that is, 1492 A.D.¹⁵¹

On this subject A. V. Kartashov recently wrote: "Antichrist is at the door. The seventh millennium, which corresponds to the seventh day of the creation, is nearing its end. The beginning of the eighth millennium, the year 1492, may be in fact the end of history and beginning of the celestial reign of glory. One must be on guard against the last temptation of Antichrist. It is necessary that the Orthodox world empire should not succumb before the advent of Christ, as the last resort, as an impregnable stronghold of Holy Orthodoxy."¹⁵² In this passage Kartashov refers to the Byzantine Empire before its final fall in 1453 but after it had unfortunately deviated from its orthodoxy at the Council of Florence (1438–1439) thereby bringing down upon itself the wrath of God. In Russia under the Grand Prince Ivan III (1462–1505) there was a very interesting religious movement known as the "heresy of the Judaizers." An important feature in the struggle between the Judaizers and their opponents was polemics concerning the end of the world, which was expected in the year 7000 (1492 A.D.). Since the world did not end in this year, the Judaizers did not fail to laugh at the Christians. At that time the question arose of a new *Paschaliya*, or schedule of dates for Easter

¹⁵⁰ *The Russian Historical Library*, VI (St. Petersburg, 1908). *Monuments of Old Russian Canonical Law*, part I (sec. ed.), p. 318 (in Old Russian).

¹⁵¹ V. Istrin, *Revelation of Methodius of Patara and apocryphical visions of Daniel in Byzantine and Slavo-Russian literature* (*Čtenija v Obščestve Istorii i Drevnostei Rossiskich*), Moscow, 1897, book IV, p. 121 (in Old Russian). See H. Schaeder, *Moskau das Dritte Rom. Studien zur Geschichte der politischen Theorien in der slavischen Welt* (Hamburg, 1929), p. 36.

¹⁵² A. V. Kartashov, "The conversion of Russia by the Holy Prince Vladimir and its national and cultural significance," *Vladimirsky Sbornik* (Belgrad, 1939), pp. 49–50 (in Russian).

of each year. The Church Fathers had compiled the *Paschaliya* only up to the year 7000. Under Ivan III, a new *Paschaliya* for one thousand years more or for the eighth millennium (chiliad) was compiled by the Metropolitan of Moscow, Zosima.¹⁵³ The title of his *Paschaliya* runs as follows: "The exposition of the *Paschaliya* for the eighth millennium, by the order of the Lord Great Prince Joann Vasilyevich of All Russias (compiled) by the Most Reverend Zosima, Metropolitan of All Russias: in it (i.e. in the eighth millennium) we expect the Universal Advent of Christ."¹⁵⁴ In the document itself, which "the new Tsar Constantine" (i.e., Ivan III) addresses "to the New City of Constantine, Moscow," we read: "The humble Zosima, Metropolitan of All Russias, has laboriously endeavored to compile the *Paschaliya* for the eighth millennium, in which we expect the Universal Advent of Christ. As to its day and hour, no one knows."¹⁵⁵ Since the date previously fixed for the Advent of Christ, 7000 (1492), had passed without any significant event, the Second Advent was anticipated during the eighth millennium but its date was not established. The year 8000 according to the Byzantine or Roman era corresponds to the year 2492 of our era from the incarnation of Christ. This year is too far distant to cause immediate concern. Since one thousand years is so long a time, the approach of each new century brings some superstitious uneasiness among uneducated people, the figure 100 being also rather uncommon in our current chronology. I remember that before the year 1900 signs of nervousness, uneasiness, and religious exaltation were observed in Russia in some regions, especially among the peasants, linked with the expectation that the world would end in 1900. But these scattered outbursts of superstitious awe, of course, are of no importance from a general point of view. To a certain extent they remind us of the "terrors" of the year 1000, but they are probably on an even smaller scale.

As we have emphasized above, the expectation of the final day has been connected in history not only with the approach of a

¹⁵³ See G. Vernadsky, "The Heresy of the Judaizers and Ivan III," *Speculum*, VIII (Oct., 1933), 440.

¹⁵⁴ *The Russian Historical Library*, VI (St. Petersburg, 1908), pp. 795-796.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 799-800. S. H. Schaeder, *Moskau das Dritte Rom* (Hamburg, 1929), pp. 36-37.

new millennium or a new century but also with some unusual or striking event, such as the fall of Constantinople and the destruction of the Roman or Byzantine Empire. Such superstitions survive in our own days. A few months ago the Russian Soviet newspaper *Bezbozhnik* (Atheist) related that recently mysterious preachers of the nearness of the supreme day and Last Judgment had disturbed the peace of many families of communist workers; children were distrusting their parents and paying too much attention to talks and whisperings heard in the streets on the nearness of the last day, the coming of Antichrist, and other premonitions of the end of the world.

The mediaeval history of the Near East shows that to the masses of its inhabitants, concerned as they were with predictions and expectations, Constantinople often personified the entire Empire and was the center of interest. To the overexcited imagination of the mediaeval mind, the fall of Constantinople must mean the fall of the Empire; that must mean the fall of the last world Empire to give place to a new eternal reign of Jesus Christ on earth with Constantinople as the new celestial Jerusalem. Political fluctuations during the course of the thousand years' existence of the Byzantine Empire caused the people to feel more or less apprehensively expectations of the final catastrophe. But upon Constantinople were always focussed universal attention, attraction, and admiration.

A proud modern Greek proverb adequately expresses the mediaeval attitude towards Constantinople: "Ολος κόσμος δώδεκα κι ἡ Πόλις δεκαπέντε."¹⁵⁶ This proverb may be roughly translated as follows: "Twelve is to fifteen as the whole world is to Constantinople."

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¹⁵⁶ K. Krumbacher, "Mittelgriechische Sprichwörter," *Sitzungsber. der phil. und histor. Classe der Akad. der Wiss. zu München*, 1893, II, 253, n. 1.